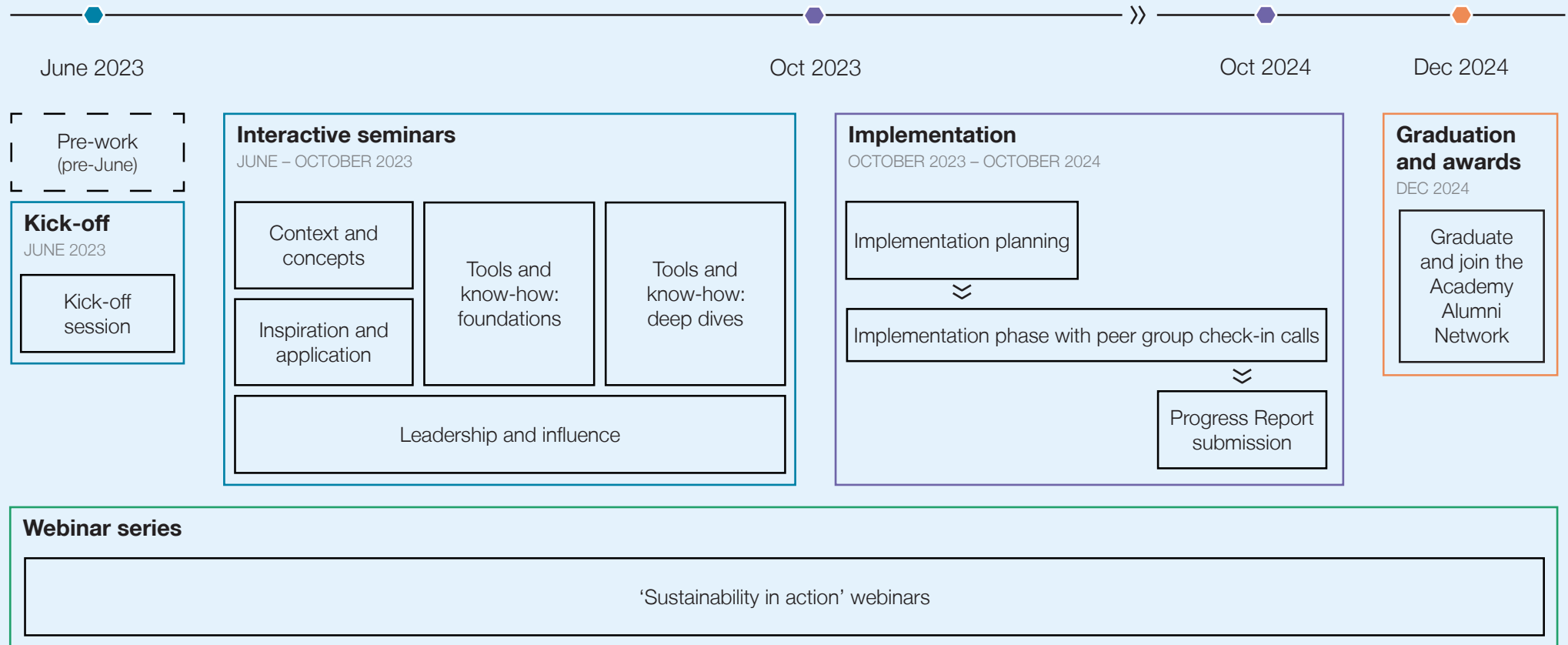




THE A4S ACADEMY
WHAT TO EXPECT

THE ACADEMY



Key information:

18-month programme

- Five months of interactive live sessions
- Complementary webinar series
- Support with developing and delivering a bespoke implementation plan
- Graduate to join an inspiring alumni network

Between 21-37 hours of live contact time

Plus optional supporting content

Flexible timetable to suit busy diaries and multiple time zones

CPD / CPE credits available

Kick-off

PRIOR TO AND DURING JUNE 2023

Pre-work

You will receive relevant pre-work which will introduce key sustainability concepts and how they relate to the role of finance teams. This pre-work should be completed prior to attending a kick-off briefing.

We also recommend having a discussion with your Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to understand their expectations for you on the programme.

REQUIREMENT: Mandatory

DATE: Prior to start of the Academy seminars

Kick-off briefing

The 1.5-hour Kick-off briefing will run through the A4S Academy programme and what you can expect over the next 18 months.

The session will explore what relevance sustainability has for your organization, your CFO and you. It also allows you to assess your own role in driving change.

You will have the opportunity to ask questions and to meet your peers, and hear what sustainability means to each of them.

REQUIREMENT: Mandatory

DATE: June

Interactive seminars

JUNE - OCTOBER 2023

Context and concepts

This 2-hour seminar reflects on traditional business norms and what a transition to sustainable business means for finance teams. You will explore different perspectives on accounting, risk and sustainability and discuss these in group exercises.

REQUIREMENT: Mandatory

Inspiration and application

This 1-hour sofa session provides an informal opportunity to hear inspiring stories and examples from the A4S CFO Leadership Network. It covers how sustainability can be driven by the CFO and the finance team, and exclusive insights on the journey each leader has taken and what lessons they have learnt.

REQUIREMENT: Mandatory

Leadership and influence

This 2.5-hour seminar aims to give you the skills to lead, persuade and influence the direction of your business to be more sustainable. It will cover pitching an idea to persuade others to change, developing a core message, the importance of storytelling, and how to develop a convincing narrative.

REQUIREMENT: Mandatory

The A4S Academy: What to expect

Tools and know-how: foundations

This 2-hour seminar will explore a typical journey for embedding sustainability into the finance function based on the Essential Guide Series. We will cover some of the foundations needed for an organization to address engagement with, and integration of, sustainability across all levels of decision making. This will include understanding how to embed sustainability into your organization's finance team culture.

REQUIREMENT: Mandatory

Tools and know-how: deep dives

The deep dive sessions will focus on embedding sustainability into specific financial processes. Each session is 2 hours and has been designed to give you enough knowledge of the topic to be able to develop an implementation plan and to drive change in that area. You are welcome to attend as many as you wish.

The following topics are covered:

- Budgeting
- Capex
- Debt finance
- Management information
- Natural, social and human capital accounting
- Reporting and investor engagement
- Strategic planning
- Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)
- Financed emissions

REQUIREMENT: Attend at least one session that fits with your organizational role and objectives.

Implementation and graduation

OCTOBER 2023 - DECEMBER 2024

Implementation planning

Having completed the interactive seminars, you will attend a 2.5-hour implementation planning workshop to help you develop a personalized 12-month implementation plan, specific to your role and your organization's objectives. It will set out specific actions to take, and stakeholders to engage, to progress towards the ambitious objectives set.

Participants will receive support and challenge from peers and bespoke feedback from A4S on their proposed activities. These plans need to be agreed with your CFO before final submission.

REQUIREMENT: Mandatory

DATE: October 2023

Check-in calls

You are supported throughout the delivery of your implementation plans through quarterly check-in calls to ensure regular interaction with both A4S and your Academy peers. The 1.5 hour check-in calls are held for all participants to share details and provide challenge on implementation progress.

REQUIREMENT: Attend at least two check-in calls.

DATE: Quarterly

Progress report submission

At the end of the implementation phase, you will complete a progress report. This will allow you to assess the impact you have achieved by working towards your objectives, and share the progress made. This will include a reflection on lessons learned, next steps, and your CFO's reflections of the change you have initiated within your organization.

Based on the reports, A4S will nominate award winners to highlight outstanding achievements.

REQUIREMENT: Mandatory

DATE: October 2024

Graduation

On successful completion of the programme, you will be invited to attend a graduation event. This will bring your peer group together to celebrate your achievements and to announce the winners of the Academy awards. Graduates will be presented with a certificate of completion.

Once graduated, you will have access to the A4S Academy Alumni Network, allowing you to stay engaged with A4S resources and grow your connections.

DATE: December 2024

Webinar series

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

‘Sustainability in action’ webinars

The interactive seminars are supported by a series of 1-hour webinars to complement your learning. Speakers and participants at the webinars cover topics related to embedding sustainability within finance.

These webinars are linked to the A4S Essential Guide Series and explore practical ways to lead the way, transform your decisions, access finance, and measure what matters.

You will hear directly from leaders in finance who have already implemented actions addressing topics such as strategic planning, budgeting, forecasting, management information, capitals accounting, and reporting amongst many others.

All webinars are recorded and are available on demand via the A4S website.

REQUIREMENT: Attend a minimum of four webinars.

DATE: Throughout the year

PREVIOUS PARTICIPANTS

Take a look at the 2021 and 2022 Academy Yearbooks to read the story of each of our graduates. Their stories illustrate what is possible within finance, and what driving change can look like, evidenced by their work. You can also use them as inspiration for your own implementation projects.

www.accountingforsustainability.org/en/academy/alumni

OUR WEBSITE

www.accountingforsustainability.org/academy

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